

# Top 10 List for Middle School Success

## 1) Attend a Brainstormers class this summer

- [www.lakeforestschoools.org/district.../lf67.../brainstormers/index.aspx](http://www.lakeforestschoools.org/district.../lf67.../brainstormers/index.aspx)

## 2) Join a Club/Team

- It is easier to make new friends and feel part of a new school culture if you engage in meaningful and interesting non-academic activities.
- <http://www.lakeforestschoools.org/deer-path/student-life/clubs-activities/index.aspx>

## 3) Read, read, read!!

- **Continuous** volume reading is the #1 way to develop good reading habits as well as increase exposure to higher-level vocabulary, reading comprehension, critical thinking, general world knowledge, and a vast array of writing techniques.
- Research shows that the least motivated readers read only 100,000 words per year, whereas the average rate for motivated readers is 1,000,000 words per year. Voracious readers read 10,000,000 - 50,000,000 words per year. Reading volume impacts exposure to print and is a strong predictor of vocabulary development.
- Summer regression can be avoided! Fluency gains can best be maintained or increased further by reading continuously. Students work so hard during the school year to increase their fluency, only to slip back over the summer and spend a great deal of the fall season recouping those lost skills rather than moving forward and closing the gap.
- [www.readingatsmithfield.wikispaces.com/file/view/cunninghamcognitconseq.pdf](http://www.readingatsmithfield.wikispaces.com/file/view/cunninghamcognitconseq.pdf)

## 4) Keyboarding

- If your keyboarding skills are spotty, practice this summer on one of our technology websites.
- You do not need to be a 10-finger fully proficient keyboarder, but knowing quickly where to find the keys eliminates one key roadblock to writing fluently. See the link below.
- <https://mrsrahman.wikispaces.com/Keyboarding>

## 5) Independence/routines at home

- Take the summer to have kids develop their own routines, write them down, and follow them. Make it student driven, student created, and focusing more on visual rather than verbal/adult-driven prompting.

## 6) Proper responsibility/use of technology

- Temptation exists with our 1:1 technology environment.
- Discuss, practice, and reinforce your expectations for responsible use of any device and the consequences at school and home for not doing so. See link below for resources.
- Consider a conversation about what strategies your child is using to self-monitor their screen time on current devices, and how having the freedom to use their 1:1 device in school might require more self-control than on their private devices.
- <https://www.common sense media.org/screen-time/age/tweens>

## 7) Organization/Executive Functioning practice

- Think about the busy routines you have in the summer. What items do you need in order to be prepared for doing/going places? Students need practice organizing and gathering needed supplies for routines, which can translate into organizing materials/being prepared for class.
- Managing your time
  - How much time do you need to get prepared to move between activities? Guesstimate and then have someone time you to see if your estimate matches reality. You may have to make some changes in how early or late you start preparing. This relates to moving between activities and classrooms in school.
- Write down your scheduled activities (what you need to do today, over a week, over a month)
  - in any format—paper or computer based
  - reduces the short-term memory overload and increases likelihood of completing everything on time
- Test out using an online calendar (i.e., Googlecal) to organize busy summer lives!
  - Benefits:
    - can set reminders
    - color code by activity
    - create a task list
    - see the value of self-organization before academic demands enter the picture
- Reinforce why doing these things are important
- Explore various organizational supports (binders, accordion docketts, folders, notebooks) to see which system would work best.

- 8) Advocating for/willingness to ask for help = the #1 skill future employers are seeking.
- The sooner you practice this skill when the stakes are small, the easier it will be when it matters the most.
  - Asking for help is a critical skill, and requires practice in a safe environment. It is not always natural or comfortable. Practice, time, and positive reinforcement will allow it to become a positive emotional memory that will increase the likelihood of students asking when they most need it and feeling relieved that they know the answer.
- 9) Contact the office for appropriate times to visit/tour DPM the week before school begins
- Take time to open up a locker so you can begin to visualize where you will put your things. Some students like to get extra locker supplies, but they are not necessary.
- 10) Extra academic support
- Before School Breakfast Club
    - Mon --> Fri 8:00am-8:25am
    - a supervised, quiet place where kids can come to start their day and prepare for their academic expectations (i.e., study, ask questions)
  - After School Homework Club
    - Mon --> Thur 3:35pm-4:30pm
  - After School Math Resource Center
    - run by LFHS students
    - twice a week 3:35pm-4:30pm

The 5th grade DPME DSS department looks forward to seeing you in the fall!!

Lino Cisternino, LD resource teacher/Department Chair  
Katie Strickland, LD resource teacher  
Kirsten Koch, LD resource teacher  
Rebecca Nelson, LD resource teacher  
Allie Johnson, LD resource teacher  
Ami Denenberg, School Psychologist  
Amy Kurth, Speech Pathologist  
Susie Brugioni, Social Worker  
Jackie Pangilinan, Social Worker  
Susan Wagemann, Occupational Therapist  
Mary Bacci, Physical Therapist  
Rita Clark, Nurse